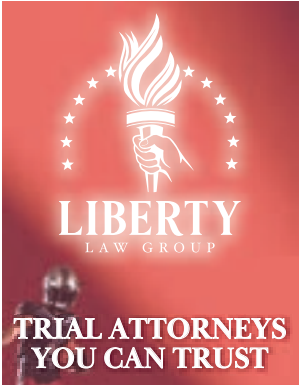




Omaha World-Herald

# SPORTS

SATURDAY, AUGUST 31, 2024  
SECTION C



## HOME (AGAIN) WHERE THE START IS

After four straight season openers on the road, NU gets throwback: home start

**EVAN BLAND**  
World-Herald Staff Writer

LINCOLN — The Nebraska buses will roll to a stop at 14th and Vine Streets at about 12:15 p.m. Saturday. Awaiting players and coaches there is a four-minute walk to the team facility as fans cheer them on.

“Does it take four minutes for us?” coach Matt Rhule asked chief of staff Susan Elza this week. Four minutes and seven seconds, she replied.

The second-year head man gave a nod and small smile. Home is where the start is to a season where the Huskers will take every edge they can find.

A 2:30 p.m. kickoff against UTEP at Memorial Stadium won’t move the national needle much. Which is fine after four straight high-exposure road trips against Big Ten opponents all began seasons with

Please see **NU FOOTBALL**, Page C7

**UTEP AT NEBRASKA**  
2:30 p.m. Saturday  
Memorial Stadium  
Fox, 92.3, 590

**It’s welcome sights — and a welcome mat — in many ways for the Huskers and fans in this season opener.**  
WORLD-HERALD PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

To bring winning and fire back to NU program, it has to start with a spark



**TOM SHATEL**

LINCOLN — There’s nothing like opening day in Football Town, U.S.A.

From Auburn to Alliance, the lights turn on a little earlier, lucky red shirts are cleaned and pressed. It feels like cars even go a little faster on opening day, fueled by an extra adrenaline rush.

All roads lead to Lincoln.

The red carpet is rolled out all over downtown, bars serve large cups of hope and dreams, all to welcome the migration home of the species known as the Husker football fanatic.

Please see **SHATEL**, Page C7

**VOLLEYBALL: NO. 12 CREIGHTON DEF. NC STATE 25-18, 25-20, 25-13**

### ‘Shockingly clean’ Jays impress in opening win

**JON WALKER**  
World-Herald Staff Writer

Creighton volleyball coach Kirsten Bernthal Booth likes a challenge. It’s why she invited three solid teams to Omaha for opening weekend.

Friday night wasn’t a challenge, though.

The No. 12 Bluejays, donning new threads in front of the third-largest crowd in Sokol Arena history, started the season with a 25-18, 25-20, 25-13 win over North Carolina State on Friday night to sweep their fifth consecutive opener.

“We just feel like that’s

Please see **CU VOLLEYBALL**, Page C2



**MEGAN NIELSEN, THE WORLD-HERALD**

**Creighton impressed in its season debut on Friday, sweeping North Carolina State before a record crowd at Sokol Arena.**



**NIKOS FRAZIER, THE WORLD-HERALD**

**Nebraska scored 10 straight points to open its win over Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, with setter Bergen Reilly posting three aces during that stretch. Reilly finished with five aces in the first set, setting a new career high.**

**VOLLEYBALL: NO. 2 NEBRASKA DEF. TAMCC 25-9, 25-20, 25-15**

### Reilly helps NU serve up sweep after strong start

**BRENT C. WAGNER**  
Lincoln Journal Star

LINCOLN — Nebraska got off to a strong start in its first home match of the season on Friday, winning the first 10 points of the first set on the way to a 25-9, 25-20, 25-15 win against Texas A&M-Corpus Christi.

Setter Bergen Reilly served the unreal start, posting three aces.

The Huskers started in a rotation with Lindsay Krause, Rebekah Allick and Merritt Beason at the net, a group with the potential to overmatch many teams.

Please see **NU VOLLEYBALL**, Page C2



BRIEFLY

SOCCER

NU-CU match moved

After having its match with UNO postponed due to inclement weather, Nebraska announced it is moving the start time of its match against Creighton.

NU will now face the Bluejays at 1:05 p.m. Monday.

The match at Hibner Stadium was originally scheduled for Sunday, but the NU athletic office says tickets will still be valid for Monday's match.

Nebraska (1-2) is looking to bounce back from a 3-0 loss last week to Duke.

FOOTBALL

Tar Heels QB out

North Carolina quarterback Max Johnson will miss the rest of the season after having surgery for a broken right leg, coming after he was carted off in the season-opening win at Minnesota and taken to the hospital.

The school announced Johnson's status on Friday, saying he had surgery in Minneapolis and is accompanied by his parents there. He will return to Chapel Hill soon and is expected to make a full recovery.

Conner Harrell, who played for the Tar Heels in last season's bowl game after Drake Maye declared for the draft, led the team the rest of the way in Thursday's 19-17 win at Minnesota and would be positioned to take over the starting job for Saturday's home game against Charlotte.

Johnson, the son of former NFL quarterback Brad Johnson, had transferred from Texas A&M and won the starting job over Harrell to replace Maye, the No. 3 overall NFL draft pick. But he was hurt when his leg bent awkwardly as he was taken to the ground on a blitz by Justin Walley in the third quarter of the game.

Johnson immediately clutched his leg around the knee and stayed down for several minutes before being carted off the field.

The fifth-year quarterback, who started his career with two years at LSU, finished 12 for 19 for 71 yards with one interception while also running for a score. The team awarded Johnson a game ball afterward.

Pitt RB ineligible

PITTSBURGH — Pitt running back Rodney Hammond Jr. has been declared ineligible and will miss the 2024 season, the school announced Friday.

No reason was provided, but Hammond remains a member of the team and can practice, the school said.

Hammond, in his fourth year, led the Panthers in rushing last year with 564 yards and scored four touchdowns.

Desmond Reid was listed as co-No. 1 on the depth chart at running back heading into Pitt's opener Saturday at home against Kent State.

Reid is a third-year transfer from Western Carolina, where he played for new Pitt offensive coordinator Kade Bell and ran for 897 yards and 13 touchdowns last season.

Midland pulls away

Midland used a 28-point fourth quarter to pull away to a 45-7 win over Clarke (Iowa) in its opener in Fremont.

Tyson Denkert had two TD runs before starting the fourth quarter with a 44-yard punt return touchdown with 12:06 left. Teryn Berry threw two TD passes in the fourth.

Denkert, a Kenesaw grad, finished with 174 yards on 18 carries. Midland's defense created four turnovers.

Dolphins extend coach

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. — The Miami Dolphins want Mike McDaniel to be around for a while.

The coach who was just the third Dolphins coach to make the play-offs in each of his first two seasons at the helm signed a contract Friday that extends him through the 2028 season. His initial contract was going to expire in 2025.

A person familiar with the deal confirmed the news first reported by ESPN, speaking to the Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the deal hadn't been announced.

The Dolphins have gone 20-14 in two seasons under McDaniel, who was hired in 2022 to replace Brian Flores. In the first head coaching job of his nearly two-decades long career, McDaniel led the Dolphins to back-to-back playoff appearances for the first time since 2000-01.

McDaniel made a name for himself rather quickly in Miami, whether for his tendency to go viral for his quick wit and quirky idiosyncrasies, or for the rapid-offensive success that he's ushered in on a Dolphins team that had long struggled on that side of the ball.

VOLLEYBALL: HOUSTON DEF. UNO 25-20, 16-25, 25-23, 23-25, 15-7

Mavericks can't carry momentum to final set

WORLD-HERALD NEWS SERVICE

Houston never trailed in the fifth set as the Cougars outlasted UNO 25-20, 16-25, 25-23, 23-25, 15-7 in the season opener at Baxter Arena.

After the Mavs won a tight fourth set, Houston quickly grabbed the momentum by winning the first three points of the fifth. UNO was within 7-4 but that's as close the Mavs got the rest of the way.

UNO committed eight hitting errors in the final set when it hit minus-.263.

UNO featured a balanced offense as Shayla McCormick

was one of four Mavs with double-digit kills. She had 17 kills and 14 digs, while McKenna Ruch had 12 kills and three blocks. Freshman Kalia Spilker led the Mavs with five blocks.

UNO rallied from 16-12 down in the first set, pulling within 19-18 on an Erica Fava ace. But Houston finished the set on a 6-2 run.

After hitting .063 in the first set, UNO settled in during the second. The Mavs scored five straight for a 9-4 lead and pulled away from there. The lead was 13-7 after back-to-back aces by Ruch, then Kali Jurgensmeier delivered her seventh kill of the set on set

point. Jurgensmeier had 11 kills on the night.

UNO led most of the third set as it stretched the lead to 17-11 on a Shayla McCormick kill. The Mavs' lead was 22-19 before Houston won six of the next seven points to take the set. Rebecca Rocassin served an ace for the final point.

Then the fourth set was close throughout as it featured 17 ties and both teams had a hitting percentage of .214. But the final tie was 23-23 and then Amanda Hardt delivered her 10th kill of the night and Ruch served her fifth ace of the night.

Ivy Leuck also had a dou-

ble-double with 30 assists and 11 digs for UNO, which will face Wyoming at 4 p.m. Saturday. Wyoming also played five sets Friday as it outlasted Washington State 15-11 in the fifth.

<b>Houston (1-0)</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>At UNO (0-1)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>UH (kills-aces-blocks):</b> Corelli 14-0-1, Grieve 12-2-2, Shimalitis 11-0-1, Rahmon 7-0-5, Barron 6-1-3, Pohl 3-0-5, Cooke 2-1-0, Rocassin 0-1-0, Georgiades 0-1-0. Totals: 55-6-17.					
<b>UNO:</b> McCormick 17-1-4, Ruch 12-5-3, Jurgensmeier 11-0-2, Hardt 10-0-1, Arnold 7-0-1, Spilker 1-0-5, Owens 0-2-0, Fava 0-1-0. Totals: 58-9-16.					
<b>Set assists:</b> UH 55 (Cooke 30, Rocassin 17, Georgiades 4, Barron 2, Grieve 1, Torres-Rivera 1), UNO 54 (Leuck 30, Owens 10, Schacher 4, Jurgensmeier 1). Digs: UH 66 (Georgiades 25, Barron 10, Grieve 9, Rocassin 7, Cooke 7, Corelli 5, Shimalitis 1, Pohl 1, Rahmon 1), UNO 74 (Fava 15, McCormick 14, Leuck 11, Schaecher 10, Owens 7, Jurgensmeier 6, Hardt 4, Ruch 3, Arnold 2, Spilker 2)					

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

East Division					GB
W	L	Pct			
New York	79	56	.585		—
Baltimore	77	58	.570		2
Boston	70	65	.519		9
Tampa Bay	66	68	.493	12½	9
Toronto	66	71	.482		14

Central Division					GB
W	L	Pct			
Cleveland	77	58	.570		—
Kansas City	75	61	.551	2½	
Minnesota	73	61	.545	3½	
Detroit	68	68	.500	9½	
Chicago	31	105	.228	46½	

West Division					GB
W	L	Pct			
Houston	73	62	.541	—	
Seattle	68	66	.507	4½	
Texas	63	72	.467	10	
Oakland	58	76	.437	14	
Los Angeles	55	79	.410	17½	

National League					GB
W	L	Pct			
Philadelphia	79	56	.585	—	
Atlanta	74	61	.548	5	
New York	71	64	.526	8	
Washington	61	74	.452	18	
Miami	49	85	.366	29½	

Central Division					GB
W	L	Pct			
Milwaukee	79	56	.585	—	
Chicago	69	66	.511	10	
St. Louis	67	68	.496	12	
Cincinnati	64	72	.471	15½	
Pittsburgh	62	72	.463	16½	

West Division					GB
W	L	Pct			
Los Angeles	80	54	.597	—	
Arizona	76	58	.567	4	
San Diego	77	60	.562	4½	
San Francisco	67	68	.496	13½	
Colorado	50	85	.370	30½	

Friday

American League				
Boston 7, Detroit 5, 10 innings				
Houston 3, Kansas City 2				
Minnesota 2, Toronto 0				
Oakland at Texas, late				
Seattle at L.A. Angels, late				

National League				
Milwaukee 5-14, Cincinnati 4-0, 10 innings				
Atlanta 7, Philadelphia 2				
Chicago Cubs 7, Washington 6				
L.A. Dodgers at Arizona, late				
Miami at San Francisco, late				

Interleague				
San Diego 13, Tampa Bay 5				
N.Y. Yankees 6, St. Louis 3				
Cleveland 10, Pittsburgh 8				
N.Y. Mets at Chicago White Sox, late				
Baltimore at Colorado, late				

Saturday				
American League				
Boston (Pivetta 5-9) at Detroit (Skubal 15-4), 5:10 p.m.				
Oakland (Estes 6-6) at Texas (Bradford 4-2), 6:05 p.m.				
Kansas City (Ragans 10-8) at Houston (Kikuchi 6-9), 6:10 p.m.				
Toronto (Berrios 13-9) at Minnesota (Matthews 1-1), 6:10 p.m.				
Seattle (Woo 6-2) at Los Angeles (Anderson 10-12), 8:38 p.m.				

National League				
Chicago (Assad 6-4) at Washington (Herz 2-6), 3:05 p.m.				
Atlanta (Fried 8-7) at Philadelphia (Wheeler 12-6), 6:15 p.m.				
Milwaukee (Montas 6-9) at Cincinnati (TBD), 6:15 p.m.				
Los Angeles (Stone 11-5) at Arizona (Kelly 4-0), 7:10 p.m.				
Miami (Cabrera 2-6) at San Francisco (TBD), 8:05 p.m.				

Interleague				
St. Louis (Gibson 7-6) at N.Y. Yankees (Warren 0-2), 12:05 p.m.				

San Diego (Vásquez 4-6) at Tampa Bay (Baz 1-2), 3:10 p.m.  
Pittsburgh (Ortiz 5-4) at Cleveland (Boyd 1-0), 5:10 p.m.  
N.Y. Mets (Quintana 6-9) at Chicago White Sox (Martin 0-2), 6:10 p.m.  
Baltimore (Kremer 6-9) at Colorado (Feltner 1-10), 7:10 p.m.

Friday's Linescores

American League									
<b>RED SOX 7, TIGERS 5, 10 INN.</b>									
Ceddanne Rafaela and Jarren Duran homered in the 10th inning as Boston rebounded after squandering a four-run lead and beat Detroit.									
<b>Boston</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>000</b>	<b>3-7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>			
<b>At Detroit</b>	<b>000</b>	<b>000</b>	<b>031</b>	<b>1-5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>			
W: K.Jansen, 4-2. L: S.Miller, 6-8. S: Martin (2). HR: Bos, Wong (12), Rafaela (14), Duran (21). Det, K.Carpenter (14).									

National League									
<b>BREWERS 5-14, REDS 4-0, 10 INN.</b>									
Milwaukee broke a tie in the 10th inning on a double play as designated runner Eric Haase scored in the first game of a doubleheader. The Brewers hit four homers in the nightcap.									
<b>Milwaukee</b>	<b>010</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>000</b>	<b>1-5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>			
<b>At Cincinnati</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>010</b>	<b>000</b>	<b>0-4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>			
W: Megill 1-3. L: Diaz 1-5. S: Williams, 7 HR: Milwaukee, Adames (25), Contreras (19). Cincinnati, Espinal (9), India (13).									

<b>Milwaukee</b>	<b>000</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>20(10)-14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>At Cincinnati</b>	<b>000</b>	<b>000</b>	<b>000-0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>
W: Hall, 1-1. L: Lowder, 0-1. HR: Mil, Mitchell (4), Hoskins (22), Adames (26), Contreras (20).					

**BRAVES 7, PHILLIES 2**  
Orlando Arcia hit a pair of solo homers, the first one as part of back-to-back shots with Sean Murphy in the third inning.

<b>Atlanta</b>	<b>002</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>100-7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>At Philadelphia</b>	<b>000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100-2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>
W: R.López, 8-4. L: Suárez, 11-6. HR: Atl, Arcia (15), Murphy (8). Phi, Stott (10), Realmuto (11).					

CUBS 7, NATIONALS 6



MEGAN NIELSEN, THE WORLD-HERALD

**Creighton's Elise Goetzinger, left, and Norah Sis combined for seven blocks for the Blue Jays. Freshman Jaya Johnson led with 11 kills.**

Arena into a frenzy

The Wolfpack controlled the first few points of the second. Midway through the set, Martin and Sis were hitting .071 combined while NC State built a lead, one that vanished because of Goetzinger and Johnson.

Goetzinger (10 kills on .471) tied the second set at 8-all. NC State jumped back in front, and she responded with a hard-hit kill that made its way through the Wolfpack and to the hardwood. Another Goetzinger kill two points later put the Jays back in the driver's seat.

Then Johnson — six kills on nine swings in the second — rode that momentum and went to work.

"We got everyone really, really involved in the match. Sometimes we're really heavy to the outside if we get out of system a lot," Booth said. "Great night against a great NC State team."

The Jays, Booth said, played with

a lot of parity. Two days before the matchup, that's exactly what she expected from NC State. It's why Booth figured the Wolfpack would be such a tough out.

NC State got good nights out of Ava Brizard and Amanda Rice, the two combining to hit .242 with 14 kills, but they were the the exceptions.

With two defensive specialists in the starting six, the Jays held the Wolfpack to .134 — their worst hitting performance since going -.038 against Pittsburgh last October.

"Wow," said Booth, who attributed that to a couple of factors. "I think we served well and they were out of system a ton, which a block to set up. ... I thought our backcourt defense was tenacious."

The Jays, Johnson said, aren't cocky coming off a season-opening win that solidified the standard they've had set for a month. They

understand every night won't be as easy as Friday looked.

Saturday surely won't be.

Creighton gets Missouri, an SEC sleeper that added a handful of key transfers this offseason, and Booth is expecting nothing short of a dog fight.

"I love playing fantastic teams, and Missouri is a fantastic team," Booth said. "Our adage is, enjoy this for a couple moments and get a good night's sleep and be ready for a battle tomorrow."

<b>NC State (0-1)</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>At Creighton (1-0)</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>NC SU (kills-aces-blocks):</b> Rice 11-0-1, Williams 6-0-1, Leoniak 4-0-1, Allen 4-0-1, Brizard 3-1-0, Groom 3-0-2, Bryant 1-0-0. Totals: 32-1-6.			
<b>CU:</b> Johnson 11-0-0, Goetzinger -0-5, Sis 9-0-2, Martin 8-2-0, Reinhardt 8-0-2, Wait 3-0-3, Breisinger 0-1-0. Totals: 49-3-12.			
<b>Set assists:</b> NCSU 32 (Cabello 20, Peterson 12), CU 44 (Wait 39, Bilinovic 3, Sis 1, Reinhardt 1). Digs: NCSU 37 (Stokes 11, Leoniak 8, Peterson 5, Cabello 3, Daniels 3, Rice 1, Williams 1, Allen 1, Bryant 1), CU 39 (Bilinovic 10, Wait 9, Martin 6, Johnson 5, Sis 4, Reinhardt 3, Breisinger 2).			

a good first home match.

"You could feel the buzz in the arena," Cook said. "I thought Corpus Christi after the first 15 points played some really good volleyball. For their size, and what they do, they're very well coached. They cover (hitters) amazing, and they don't make errors."

Krause led the Huskers with 13 kills on .478 hitting.

Allick had kills on each of her first five attempts and finished with six kills on .600 hitting. Andi Jackson had seven kills and also hit .600.

In the second set, the Islanders were more aggressive with their serves and swings and trailed 22-19 late.

Then Jackson smashed a kill on

a short slide play, and Reilly had a block on set point for a 25-20 win.

In the third set, Nebraska brought in transfer outside hitter Taylor Landfair and transfer middle blocker Leyla Blackwell for their first extended time on the court.

"We changed the lineup in the third (set), and we didn't miss a beat," Cook said. "Sometimes when we do that it backfires a little bit. I'm really pleased with all of that."

Landfair had some impressive kills, finishing with five on 10 attempts.

"It's hard coming off the bench," Cook said. "We've been working the last couple of days on (Landfair) really hitting the ball

hard, and she swung hard tonight. I think that left-front player is going to be remembering that hit for a while. There's not many players